

THE VINITA WEEKLY CHIEFTAIN.

VOL. XXV

VINITA, OKLAHOMA, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER, 15 1906

NO. 11

The Weekly Chieftain and The Oklahoman Farm Journal Both for \$1.00 Per Year

COMMITTEE SEEKS TO BE IMPRESSED

Senators Have Evidently Had New Ideas Concerning Restrictions and Oil and Gas Leases

The citizens of the Indian Territory have been confident all along that the reason congress had seemed to pay so little intelligent attention to the needs of this country has been that the members were not acquainted personally with conditions here. We have believed that if the members of congress could come to this country and see conditions for themselves they would be willing to grant the requests which we have been making.

A committee representing the senate of the United States is now here, and the confidence of the people in the righteousness of their cause seems in a fair way of being justified. Certainly the senators seem to be taking a great interest in conditions as presented to them by the various persons appearing before them, and if one may judge from their expressions and the questions they ask, they are fast coming to our way of thinking on all important subjects of the removal of the restrictions and the injustice of the present rules and relations regarding the lease of mineral lands.

This morning Seymour Riddle addressed the senators on the oil and gas lease question, and they were intensely interested in the conditions as Mr. Riddle presented them. Mr. Riddle's statement that an assignment of a lease in which the assignee might make any profit could secure the approval of the secretary of the interior was one that the senators at first could not believe, and when at last it was proved to them beyond doubt Senator Teller exclaimed, "I shouldn't think any man of common sense would take a lease under such circumstances."

Mr. Riddle said, speaking of the secretary of the interior, "He has reserved to himself the power upon ten days notice to confiscate oil properties by cancelling leases, and that too without recourse to any court. Careful business men are afraid of this arbitrary and unusual power. They believe that no just man desires such power and that no man should be given such authority. We demand that the Cherokee citizens be allowed to lease their lands for oil and gas purposes without the approval of the secretary of the interior.

Then the valuable field would be developed on a business basis. With these burdensome rules and regulations which are now imposed upon us wiped out there would be ten men seeking to lease on the Indian property where one is seeking that right now. The present rules have a tendency to limit the number of persons who are able and willing to engage in business and thereby decrease the value of oil lands and reduce the amount of production and retard this great industry."

C. S. Avery called attention to the case of his brother in law, a Cherokee citizen, who was not allowed by the secretary to develop his own land. J. E. Campbell of Alliwsaid his daughter had likewise been prevented from developing her land. In both cases the Prairie Oil & Gas company, acting under the secretary's orders, refused to accept the oil.

Before the question of oil leases was taken up this morning, Chester H. Howe a Washington attorney spoke on behalf of certain persons claiming to be Cherokee by blood who have been denied enrollment, and who asserted that their cases had never been heard on their merits. J. S. Davenport replied on behalf of the Cherokee nation.

Something of dramatic interest was imparted to the proceedings yesterday afternoon when Redbird Smith, leader of the Cherokee Nighthawks standing before the four senators of the United States, exclaimed with uplifted hands that the allotment of Indian lands had been made without the approval of the fullbloods, and never would they consent to take al-

lotments. "I could not stand to take an allotment," said the old man, speaking in Cherokee. "all around us here are powerful people waiting for a chance to cheat us out of our inheritance. I will stand and die for the old conditions. It was a sin before God to allot the Cherokee lands."

Senator Long explained that it was because the Indians had voted in favor of a treaty of allotment that the lands had been allotted, but the old fullbloods could not be appeased. Senator Teller told him that unless the Indians did accept their allotments their land would be taken by others.

Several other fullbloods spoke in much the same vein as Redbird Smith Eufaula Harjo, leader of the Crazy Snake faction of the Creeks, and Willis F. Tobey, a Choctaw, both announced that they were opposed to the allotment of the lands and wanted the old conditions back. Tobey stated that the treaty providing for the allotment of the Choctaw and Chickasaw lands had been approved only thru the action of its advocates in intimidating the fullbloods and buying their votes with whisky. Asked for the names of those who had done this, he presented a list of 13 names.

Joe Fox, another fullblood Cherokee, took a sorer view of the situation than the others who had preceded him. He said he had opposed the adoption of the treaty providing for the allotment of the lands, but that since it had been adopted he proposed to live up to the law, and had selected his allotments.

In his opinion the restrictions are a good thing. He said the fullbloods favor them because without them they would be required to pay taxes and their lands would soon be taken from them under one guise or another. By the end of 21 years he thinks the fullbloods will be fully qualified to care for their lands.

However, in case the restrictions are removed, he expressed himself as confident of his ability to care for himself, and thought most of the Cherokee would be able to do so.

At the conclusion of Fox's talk, which like those that preceded it, was made thru an interpreter, the committee took a recess for supper.

The night session also was devoted principally to the fullbloods. Every speaker brought with him at least one petition of communication, and by adjournment the table was heaped high with papers.

The first speaker was a fullblood Chickasaw, who declared that, because the mixed bloods, the adopted citizens and the freedmen had been allowed to vote, neither he nor any other fullblood had voted for the ratification of the treaty providing for the allotment of the lands, and had refused and would continue to refuse to accept allotments.

"When our father sent us here from east of the Mississippi," he said, "he promised that we should have these lands forever, without disturbance or interference. We do not recognize the validity of the treaty of allotment; all we want is the restoration of our old rights."

The Chickasaw was followed by John Cornthwaite of Vinita, a Cherokee, who spoke without an interpreter, and made a hit with the committee and audience by his quaint language and excellent sense. He contended that in the matter of the removal of the restrictions the fullbloods should have the same privileges as the mixed bloods. He declared himself as being just as good as any half breed, and said he was as competent as any of them to manage his own property. He declared that any fullblood who shows himself competent to manage his property should have his restrictions removed on application.

Richard Glory, another fullblood Cherokee, made an especially strong talk. He is an educated man, and

Concluded on page 8.

COMMITTEE NOW HERE

Members Arrived Here This Morning and are Now In Session.

From Tuesday's Daily

The members of the senatorial investigating committee arrived in Vinita at 11:10 on the Katy fast mail from the north. They should have come on the flyer, but their train out of Kansas City was delayed, and missed connections. The members of the committee now in Vinita are Senator Clark of Wyoming, chairman, Long of Kansas, Brandeis of Connecticut and Teller of Colorado. Senator Clark of Montana was delayed and will join the committee at Muskogee.

As soon as the train had arrived and the senators had been greeted by the reception committee, they were driven to the Commercial Club rooms, where their sessions will be held. Senator Clark, chairman of the committee, as soon as introductions had been made, called the committee to order, and then, addressing those present, stated that inasmuch as the committee's time was so limited, and as the most they could hope to do would be to skim the surface, they had decided to employ every moment of their time while in the territory in endeavoring to secure a grasp of conditions here, and they would therefore take no part in any social functions.

"Everything will be submitted to an honest effort to reach wise and sane conclusions."

"We are ignorant," he said, "of the particular things that concern each particular locality, and it is these which we wish to learn. We have given a general invitation for everybody to appear before us. However since our time is short, we request that all matters be presented in as concise a shape as possible, and that, where there are several interested in the same subject, a spokesman be selected to act for all."

Then, after announcing that the committee would be ready to begin business at 1:30, the members adjourned to the Cobbs' dinner. There are three ladies with the party, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. H. M. Teller, and Mrs. Willard Teller, the Senator's sister in law. There are several other gentlemen besides the senators, the party consisting of twelve all told. During their stay here they will take their meals at the Cobbs, but will sleep in their Pullmans, which has been put on the siding at the mail platform. The ladies were taken for a drive this morning by the ladies of Vinita, and they had an invitation to attend Mrs. Orr's reception this afternoon.

Promptly at 1:30 the first sitting of the committee was called to order by Senator Clark. The Commercial club room was crowded with those who had come, either to listen to the proceedings, or to present some complaint. A very large portion of those present were Indians.

Among the first speakers was M. B. Peeler of Miami, chief of the Ottawas. He told the senators that of 100 members of the tribe only three are fullbloods, and all but one can talk English. He said every Ottawa but one is in favor of the removal of the restrictions, while all are competent to manage their own business.

A. S. Thomas and S. C. Fullerton, Miami attorneys, explained various legal phases connected with the present system of land laws. Mr. Fullerton paying special attention to the refusal of the secretary of the interior to approve deeds to lands sold by order of the United States courts.

R. W. Finley, a Peoria, spoke in behalf of his tribe. There are about 180 members, each of whom has an allotment of 200 acres, of which 100 may be sold on approval of the secretary of the interior. Of the money received for this sale, however, the Indians receive but \$10 monthly.

Mr. Finley said there is not a Peoria

DEMOCRATS FACE STRENUOUS TIME

Log Rolling for Constitutional Convention Has Already Begun
--Are Signs of a Split.

On Tuesday the constitutional convention will be convened at Guthrie. The report that the convention would be adjourned to another city was started as a joke, and was not meant seriously: the convention will remain in Guthrie. Just at present there is a hot campaign for the presidency; the leading candidate seems to be W. C. Hughes, a young Oklahoma City lawyer.

John Wadsworth, the oldest Peoria, corroborated what Mr. Finley had said. He stated, however, that rather than that they should be permitted to sell their land and have the proceeds doled out at the rate of \$10 per month, he would prefer to see conditions remain just as they are.

D. H. Wilson of this city related an attempt of his to buy some Quapaw land under the order of the court, and of Mr. Hitchcock's action in refusing to sanction the deed.

It is possible that the entire time of the committee today will be taken up in listening to complaints of the Indians present. Representatives of the various commercial clubs are present, but they will give the Indians right of way.

Tonight from 8 to 9 o'clock a public reception will be given in the Commercial club rooms to the members of the committee, to which all citizens of Vinita, and especially the ladies, are invited. The committee will be in session all day tomorrow.

The problems that are giving the constitution-makers most trouble are county boundaries and prohibition. Having such a tremendous majority in the convention, the Democrats will have to take all the praise or blame, and so many promises were made by the delegates in their race for election that they are beginning to wonder if it will be possible for them to redeem them all.

The county boundary question is a particularly difficult one. For instance, if W. H. Kornegay gives Vinita a big county and a central location, Centralia and Afton and other aspiring towns will attempt to knife him, and the Democratic party which he represents. And, if he doesn't give Vinita what Vinita thinks she ought to have, Vinita will do things at the first opportunity. And the same condition that obtains here ex-

ists all over the territory, in the case of all the other delegates just as in Mr. Kornegay's case.

Then the prohibition question will not down. The prohibitionists won't be still, and the Democrats will have to take a stand one way or the other. It is probable that the problem will be solved by submitting a prohibition clause to the people for separate vote. Another cause for anxiety in the Democratic camp is in regard to the essential differences between the northern and southern Democrats. They have been united on but two propositions, their desire for office and their determination to eliminate the negro, as far as possible, from all participation in the government of the state of Oklahoma. They have the offices and what they will do to the negro can be easily conjectured.

But, when it comes to the other points of the constitution, the differences between the two cliques are almost certain to cause trouble. There isn't a town in either territory where local disturbances have not been many and serious between the two branches, and these differences of opinion are likely to become more pronounced as the work of writing a constitution progresses.

The corporations are already becoming active. Their lobbies are already busy in Guthrie. The bank trust and Standard Oil will have special representation, and the railroads of course will be looked after. Some ten or twelve of the delegates are or have been railroad attorneys. The eyes of the entire new state will be centered on the convention, and it will be difficult for any delegate to escape the responsibility for his votes.

BIG STEAL CASE ENDED

Someone Profited From Contributions to Frisco.

San Francisco, Nov. 14.—The Chronicle says: "It appears that many subscriptions of money and other articles sent from the various states for the sufferers from the recent earthquake calamity never reached the relief committee. Government agents are now making a rigid inspection to discover the facts."

President Roosevelt is the moving spirit behind the inquiry. He says that no guilty man shall escape. It is said that in the aggregate the steals will amount to a million dollars."

BRIBERY EXPOSED

Standards Attempt to Buy Jureymen at Findlay.

Cleveland, Nov. 14.—Special to the News from Findlay, Ohio today says:

According to C. C. Myers, a member of the jury that convicted the Standard Oil Company of violating the anti-trust law, a bribe of five hundred dollars was twice offered him during the trial on condition that he hang the jury.

Mr. He well also appeared before the board, and stated that he believed that the jurisdiction of the board was limited to canvassing the votes as they were rendered. The board finally adopted his view.

A. S. Weeks, who filed a contest against W. A. Ledbetter of district 100, Ardmore, did not appear to press his contest.

General Shafter Dead.

Bakersfield, Cal., Nov. 12.—Major General Shafter died here this afternoon.

Washington, Nov. 14.—The comptroller of the currency today issued a call for a statement of the condition of the National banks at the close of business November 12.

Castro Dead.

Port de France, Island of Martinique, Nov. 14.—President Castro of Venezuela is reported dead.